

Build Back Better plan embodied the vision of the American people and is the kind of legislation that assures our people, hardworking Americans across the country, that we will not abandon them in their time of need.

Now, I love history. And tomorrow is a very special day in the Virgin Islands. It is Contract Day. I can't help but make the connection between the landmark provisions outlined in Build Back Better, this transformational piece of legislation, and what is happening in our Halls of Congress as we come to the point of passing that, with the struggle that took place in my home on St. Croix on October 1, 1878. Then known as the Danish West Indies, on that day in history, almost 150 years ago, four brave, stalwart women led the St. Croix Labor Rebellion, also known to us in the Virgin Islands as "Fireburn." We honor the memory and sacrifices made by our ancestors on this day, which we call Contract Day.

Now, after slaves in the Danish West Indies organized, fought, and took their freedom from chattel slavery in 1848, a new type of slavery was formed in a labor bill the following year to regulate the now free workers. The law stipulated a day wage and restricted and confined workers to remain on one plantation for the entire year. That location could only change on Contract Day, October 1.

Former slaves worked on the same plantation as before with little to no improvements in their living conditions, healthcare, no childcare, education, no change in income. These new restrictions forced the workers to bear an impossible, untenable burden. They soon realized that they were free in name alone.

The untenable working and living conditions along with the false hope that labor laws may change and then finding out that they were not going to change, ignited a protest that led to a rebellion in Fredriksted on the island of St. Croix. That movement was bravely led by four women who we immortalize in our history as the queens: Queen Mary Thomas, Queen Mathilde Macbean, Queen Susanna "Bottom Belly" Abrahamson, and Queen Axeline "Queen Agnes" Salomon, demanding all plantations improve workers' wages and repeal the Labor Act of 1849.

Many of the protestors were killed; hanged. The women were tied to a stake, covered in molasses, and burned, irony being that the same cane that they cut, made into sugar and molasses, would be the instrument of their cruel death.

The fight for appropriate pay, job creation, equity and improvement in working conditions, living wages, sanitary housing, clean drinking water, especially for those in need, continues today in America. And we are attempting to solve those with the provisions in President Biden's Build Back Better plan.

All people, they simply want support, a foundation for them to have a rep-

utable shot at the American Dream. Women want meaningful jobs and the ability to leave their children in sanitary, clean, safe, affordable childcare; the ability to buy a home so that you can obtain equity for your children's college; to start a business.

When I think of my ancestors and how bravely they fought—some to their death—for the causes of equity and improved labor conditions, I am encouraged to continue advocating, championing, fighting for the changes that I believe the Build Back Better plan will bring us closer to, bring our Nation and those within it to those dreams that we all have.

I pray this same encouragement and spirit of boldness and perseverance for all of my colleagues who are standing with us in that fight.

□ 1115

RECOGNIZING CHIEF OF POLICE DAVID STEFFEN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. SMUCKER) for 5 minutes.

Mr. SMUCKER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to congratulate a dedicated law enforcement officer from Pennsylvania's 11th Congressional District.

Northern Lancaster County Regional Chief of Police David Steffen was recently selected to serve as the president of the Pennsylvania Chiefs of Police Association, which represents over 1,200 commanding level officers across local, State, and Federal law enforcement entities in Pennsylvania.

Chief Steffen has spent his 40-plus-year career in law enforcement, having served in Jackson Township, Hampden Township, and then the Northern York County Regional Police Department, before being named the first chief of Northern Lancaster County Regional Police Department in 2011.

As chief of the department, Steffen leads over 30 full-time sworn officers and three civil staff, covering approximately 100 square miles in north central Lancaster County.

Madam Speaker, I would like to thank Chief Steffen for supporting his fellow law enforcement officers, for achieving this recognition, and congratulate him on his new and well-deserved role.

To Chief Steffen and law enforcement officers across Pennsylvania's 11th District and across the country, thank you for your dedicated service and your efforts to keep our community safe.

HONORING ELIZABETHTOWN MAYOR CHUCK
MUMMERT

Mr. SMUCKER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to offer my congratulations to Mayor Chuck Mummert of Elizabethtown Borough in Lancaster County.

Mayor Mummert was recently named Mayor of the Year by the Associations of Mayors of Boroughs of Pennsylvania. Mayor Mummert has served the

residents of Elizabethtown since 2006, in his first 4 years as a member of borough council there, and then since 2010 as mayor.

In addition to this honor, Mayor Mummert, in 2018, received the Governor's Award for Local Government Excellence, and he previously served as president of the Pennsylvania State Association of Boroughs.

Mayor Mummert is known as the singing mayor, as he is frequently called upon to lend his talented voice in singing the national anthem at events; something that I have certainly always enjoyed.

So I want to congratulate Mayor Mummert on being named Mayor of the Year, and to thank him for all of his work in continuing to make Elizabethtown Borough an exceptional place to live, work, and raise a family.

HONORING FATHER EMIL JOSEPH KAPAUN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Kansas (Mr. ESTES) for 5 minutes.

Mr. ESTES. Madam Speaker, today I would like to honor one of the finest men to ever come from the State of Kansas, Father Emil Joseph Kapaun, or Kapaun, as he is frequently referred to in Kansas.

Father Kapaun, or Kapaun, who grew up on a farm in Kansas, was ordained as a priest for the Wichita Diocese on June 9, 1940. He went on to become a U.S. Army Chaplain during World War II and the Korean war with the rank of captain.

Father Kapaun died in a North Korean prison camp on May 23, 1951, at the age of 35. In 35 short years, Father Kapaun sacrificed more and saved more lives and souls than many could ever hope to do in 100 years.

Many around the world rightly celebrate the story of Father Kapaun, who is being considered for sainthood by the Catholic Church; a first for a native Kansan.

His Medal of Honor citation gives a small glimpse at the deep reservoir of Father Kapaun's bravery and honor. It reads:

Chaplain Kapaun calmly walked through his withering enemy fire in order to provide comfort and medical aid to his comrades and rescue the wounded from no-man's-land.

After the battle, when given the option to escape to safety with his unit, Father Kapaun volunteered to stay behind to care and minister to the wounded. He was subsequently captured by the Communists and taken to a prison camp where he was forced to march more than 60 miles in harsh weather.

While in captivity, his frank, down-to-earth Kansas manner, along with the unassuming farm style and dry wit, made him the servant leader for all the POWs held by the Communists. Although greatly suffering himself, he always put his needs second to others. His strength and optimism allowed his

fellow GIs to once again believe that they would one day return to freedom in America.

We know that Father Kapaun suffered unthinkable cruelty at the hands of his prison guards who had a special hatred for Christians. But as the many stories attest, their rage and violence did not deter Father Kapaun in the slightest.

One of his fellow prisoners wrote a letter upon returning from Korea, saying that, "with his scraggly beard and his odd-looking woolen cap made of the sleeve of an old GI sweater, pulled down over his ears, he looked like any other half-starved prisoner.

"But there was something in his voice and bearing that was different—a dignity, a composure, a serenity that radiated from him like a light. Wherever he stood was holy ground, and the spirit within him a spirit of reverence and abiding faith went out to the silent, listening men and gave them hope and courage and a sense of peace. By his very presence, somehow, he could turn a stinking, louse-ridden mud hut, for a little while, into a cathedral."

Another passage from that letter reads that, as Father Kapaun spoke, "the agony in the garden, the road to Calvary, the Crucifixion, became very real to us, who ourselves lived daily under the threat of death, and who bore our own crosses of blows, and cold, and illness, and starvation. But Christ endured, he told us, and we, too, must endure, for the day of resurrection from the tomb of the prison camp would surely come."

For generations, Father Kapaun has inspired hundreds around the world to greater faith and service through adversity. Today, I am proud that Father Kapaun has returned home to his native Kansas. He is truly an American hero of the first class.

DEMOCRATS' WASTEFUL SPENDING

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York (Mr. JACOBS) for 5 minutes.

Mr. JACOBS of New York. Madam Speaker, I urge the Democratic leadership to heed the message of Senator JOE MANCHIN and take a strategic pause on the \$4.3 trillion reconciliation bill they are attempting to pass. To spend this amount of money on top of the nearly \$6 trillion we have spent on COVID since last March is reckless to say the least. We should not forget the long-term debt crisis we are facing.

The graph beside me shows how dire this fiscal outlook is. By 2051, as is shown in this chart, the Congressional Budget Office projects our debt will reach 202 percent of the GDP. In other words, more than twice our annual output. And that does not include the \$4.3 trillion the Democrats are proposing to spend in this reconciliation package.

This will far exceed the debt levels even after World War II. As you can see in the graph, at the end of World War

II our debt fell sharply and continued falling for several decades.

Madam Speaker, this body needs to come together now, just as we did back after World War II, to get our fiscal house in order. I know no one here wants to see this projection become reality where we will have record and unsustainable debt loads for decades and decades to come.

I urge my Democratic colleagues to end their reckless spending proposals and work with us to get our fiscal house back in order. This cannot be the legacy we leave for our children and our grandchildren.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until noon today.

Accordingly (at 11 o'clock and 23 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1200

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Ms. DEGETTE) at noon.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Margaret Grun Kibben, offered the following prayer:

God, search our hearts and examine our minds. Reach into our inmost being and call us to account for what resides therein.

Then heal us, Lord, and we will be healed. Heal us from all that has wounded our spirits or hindered us from living into our best selves.

Save us and we will be saved. Save us from the uncertainty and unrest of these days. Save us from all that distracts us from seeing You—Your hand in our lives or Your face reflected in those around us.

We ask for a word from You. Speak that we may hear. Attend to our pleas that we may be assured of Your favor. Then may Your grace plan be fulfilled in our lives.

At the end of the day, O Lord, reward us according to our faithfulness to the tasks You have laid before us. Give us not what our deeds deserve, but may we receive what Your grace provides.

In Your merciful name we pray.

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to section 11(a) of House Resolution 188, the Journal of the last day's proceedings is approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Will the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. CLINE)

come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. CLINE led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair will entertain up to 15 requests for 1-minute speeches on each side of the aisle.

HONORING THE LIFE OF SERGEANT MAJOR DAN ALTIERI

(Mr. GALLEGO asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. GALLEGO. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor and say goodbye to my friend and my brother, Sergeant Major Dan Altieri. We served together in Iraq.

I have one minute to speak about a man who gave thousands of marines years of their life back, one minute to speak about a marine, a patriot, a brother, a legend, who loved us, unconditionally, both on the battlefield and off.

In this magic minute, I must tell you about a marine that is timeless, one who will not be forgotten by his men. He laughed with us in the good times. He mourned with us in the bad times. He was always ready to be there and say: "Hey, brother, how are you doing?" And like a father that many of us never had, he would always say: "I am proud of you."

My minute is up, my Sergeant Major is gone, but his legend will live on.

Semper fi, Sergeant Major Altieri.

REMEMBERING PRIVATE NICOLE BURNHAM

(Mr. EMMER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. EMMER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of Private Nicole Burnham. Private Burnham didn't die on the battlefield. Her life was stolen by the cruelty of her fellow soldiers and the apathy of her superiors.

There are several tragedies in Nicole's story.

The first is the horrific sexual assault she endured at the hands of her fellow soldiers.

The second is the failure of our military leadership to protect her.

The third is the amount of time it took to ensure something like this never happens again.

Nicole did everything right. She reported the incident and applied for a transfer. Instead, her superiors, who are capable of deploying soldiers into a war zone overnight, let her request languish for an unconscionable 82 days. During that time, she was harassed, ostracized, and assaulted a second time.